



Are You Ready for NPE2027?

A Strategic Planning Guide for Plastics Exhibitors

May 3–7, 2027 | Orlando, Florida | Orange County Convention Center

EXPERIENCES. ELEVATED.

SECTION 01

The Opportunity

NPE is not just another trade show. It's the largest plastics trade show in the Americas, held once every three years. That means the company that shows up unprepared doesn't get a do-over in six months—they wait until 2030.

For most exhibitors on this floor, NPE represents the single largest marketing investment of the year. Booth space, custom fabrication, shipping, travel, show services, staffing—the total cost adds up fast. And your leadership team is going to want to know it was worth it.

The good news: this audience is worth showing up for.

55,000+ Attendees from 110+ countries	71% Are decision-makers or influencers	32% Have purchasing budgets of \$1M or higher	2,200+ Exhibiting companies
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Source: NPE.org / Plastics Industry Association

Those numbers aren't just impressive on paper. They mean that the people walking past your booth are real buyers with real budgets—not tire-kickers. Half are in management or C-suite roles. Nine out of ten represent unique companies. The density of qualified traffic on this floor is unlike almost any other event in manufacturing.

But density cuts both ways. With 2,200+ exhibitors competing for attention across more than a million square feet, the companies that win at NPE are the ones that plan early, plan deliberately, and show up with a booth that's built to work—not just built to look good.



That's what this guide is for. Whether you're a first-time NPE exhibitor or a veteran returning from 2024, the pages that follow give you a practical, phase-by-phase playbook for turning your NPE investment into measurable results.

NPE 2027 · ORLANDO · MAY 3-7

51,000 professionals walk onto this floor.

From 133 countries. 2,200+ exhibitors. 1.1 million square feet. The raw volume is staggering — but the headline number isn't the story. What matters is what happens when the crowd concentrates.

THE CROWD SHARPENS

71%

Are Decision-Makers or Influencers

Nearly three of every four people on this floor either sign the PO or shape the shortlist. They're not browsing — they're evaluating.

INSIDE THAT

59%

Are Direct Decision-Makers

Authority to approve purchases, sign contracts, and greenlight new vendors. Not influencers. Deciders.

THE CORE

32%

Control Budgets Exceeding \$1 Million

One in three attendees manages seven-figure annual purchasing spend. These are the people every exhibitor is trying to reach — and they're walking right past your booth.

AND THEY'RE NOT DUPLICATES

90%

Buyers from Unique Companies

Almost every badge represents a distinct business. Minimal overlap. Maximum reach.



2,200+
EXHIBITORS

133
COUNTRIES

~50%
FIRST-TIMERS

50%
MGMT / C-SUITE

92%
CAME TO SOURCE

51,000 walk in.
The show floor filters them for you.

\$142 vs \$259 **46%** **74%**
PER SHOW MEETING PER FIELD VISIT ATTEND ONE SHOW/YR BUY AFTER ENGAGING

SOURCES: NPE2024 OFFICIAL DATA · CEIR · EXHIBITOR MAGAZINE
NPE 2027 · MAY 3-7 · OCCC ORLANDO, FL

EXPERIENCES. ELEVATED.

SECTION 03

Your NPE2027 Planning Timeline

The most common mistake exhibitors make isn't picking the wrong booth size or the wrong graphics—it's starting too late. NPE planning has a rhythm, and every missed milestone creates downstream pressure that shows up as rush fees, compromised design, or a team scrambling on the show floor.

Here's what a well-run NPE timeline looks like, working backward from May 2027:

PHASE	WHEN	WHAT TO DO
NOW	Spring 2026	Space is selected. Begin booth evaluation—does your current exhibit still serve your goals? Start conversations w
DESIGN	Summer–Fall 2026	Lock in booth concept, layout, and design direction. Finalize custom elements, interactive features, and AV require
BUILD	Winter 2026–27	Fabrication, graphic production, and pre-show quality checks. Coordinate show services (electrical, rigging, draya
PREP	Feb–Apr 2027	Staff training, lead capture setup, pre-show marketing campaigns, meeting scheduling, and travel arrangements. F
SHOW	May 3–7, 2027	Execute. Capture leads, host demos, run meetings, collect content. Every hour on the floor should have a purpose
POST	May–Jun 2027	Follow up within 48 hours. Score and route leads. Debrief with your team. Measure results against pre-show objec

Where you are right now: Space Selection happened in March 2026. If you're reading this, you're in the critical design window. The decisions you make in the next few months determine what your presence looks like on opening day. This is the phase where the best exhibitors separate themselves from the rest.

SECTION 04

Align Your Booth with Your Goals



Your company's reasons for exhibiting at NPE may have shifted since the last cycle. New products, new markets, a rebrand, a change in leadership—any of these can change what your booth needs to accomplish. Before you greenlight a design, make sure the brief matches the business.

Sit down with your sales team, your marketing lead, and whoever controls the exhibit budget. Ask one question: **what does success at NPE2027 look like for us?** Get specific. "Generate leads" isn't specific enough. "Capture 150 qualified leads from molders with \$5M+ revenue" is.

Define Your Show Objectives

Check every objective that applies. Then rank your top three—your booth design, staffing plan, and pre-show marketing should all be optimized around those three.

- Launching or showcasing new products** — Requires dedicated display zones, lighting, and possibly live demo infrastructure
- Generating qualified leads** — Requires clear traffic flow, lead capture technology, and staff trained on qualification criteria
- Strengthening relationships with existing customers** — Requires private or semi-private meeting space within the booth
- Expanding brand visibility in the plastics market** — Requires bold graphics, strong sightlines, and a presence that reads from 50 feet away
- Running live equipment or machinery demos** — Requires structural engineering, power planning, safety compliance, and crowd management
- Recruiting talent or showcasing company culture** — Requires a welcoming area with collateral that speaks to candidates, not just customers
- Driving post-show press or media coverage** — Requires a press kit, a media-friendly demo schedule, and a story worth covering
- Evaluating competitive landscape and trends** — Build time into your staff schedule for floor walks and competitive intelligence

Once your objectives are locked, every decision downstream—booth layout, graphics, technology, staffing—should trace back to this list. If a design element doesn't serve one of your top three objectives, question whether it belongs.

SECTION 05

Design for the NPE Floor

NPE is not a typical trade show, and your booth shouldn't be treated like one. The plastics industry floor has challenges you won't find at most events: live extrusion lines, injection molding machines running at full cycle, robotic arms in motion, and heavy auxiliary equipment that requires structural planning most exhibit houses aren't equipped to handle.

Your booth isn't just a marketing environment—it's a working production space that also needs to attract, engage, and convert visitors. Getting that balance right is what separates a booth that performs from one that just takes up square footage.



Your NPE Design Checklist

- Structural integrity for heavy equipment** — Confirm load-bearing capacity, floor reinforcement, and rigging points before finalizing layout
- Power and utilities planning** — Map electrical, compressed air, water, and drainage requirements early. NPE show services have lead times and surcharges for late orders
- Traffic flow that separates viewers from operators** — Design pathways that let attendees observe demos safely without creating bottlenecks at your booth entrance
- Sightlines that work at distance** — On a million-square-foot floor, your booth needs to read from 50+ feet. Invest in height, overhead signage, and bold graphics
- Lighting that directs attention** — Focused lighting on products, demos, and messaging. Backlit graphics and accent lighting separate professional booths from the rest
- Dedicated meeting space** — Serious conversations don't happen in the aisle. Even a small enclosed area gives your sales team a place for real discussions
- Technology integration** — Touchscreens, video walls, AR/VR, and live data displays extend engagement. But only add tech that serves a purpose
- Graphics that communicate in 5 seconds** — Attendees decide whether to enter your space in the time it takes to walk past. Answer instantly: who you are, what you do, why it matters

SECTION 06

Extend Your Impact Beyond the Booth

Your booth is the centerpiece, but it's not the whole campaign. The exhibitors who get the most out of NPE treat the show as a five-day window inside a much longer marketing effort—one that starts months before the doors open and continues weeks after they close.



Before the Show

Set meetings before you arrive. Don't rely on walk-up traffic alone. Use your CRM, your sales team's relationships, and targeted email outreach to schedule meetings with priority accounts before the show. A full calendar on day one is a sign that your pre-show strategy is working.

Build anticipation with content. A teaser video, a countdown email series, or a LinkedIn campaign showcasing your NPE booth design can drive traffic before attendees even land in Orlando. Show them what they'll experience—give them a reason to seek you out.

Arm your sales team with talking points. Everyone staffing the booth should know the top three objectives, the key products being showcased, and the qualifying questions to ask every visitor. No one should be improvising on the floor.

During the Show

Capture everything. Video testimonials, product demos, customer conversations, and booth energy—all of it becomes content for the next 12 months of marketing. Assign someone to document the show, even if it's just a phone and a plan.

Qualify in real time. Not every badge scan is a lead. Train your team to rate conversations on the spot—hot, warm, or informational—so your post-show follow-up is prioritized from day one.

Use social media as a live channel. Post floor updates, behind-the-scenes content, and highlights daily. Tag visitors, partners, and the NPE official accounts. This extends your reach to thousands of industry professionals following the show remotely.

After the Show

Follow up within 48 hours. The single biggest ROI killer in trade show marketing is slow follow-up. Leads go cold fast. Your hottest prospects should hear from you before they're back at their desks—ideally with a personalized message that references your conversation, not a generic “thanks for visiting.”

Score and route leads immediately. Hot leads go to sales for direct outreach. Warm leads go into a nurture sequence. Informational contacts go into your marketing database. If you don't sort them, they all get treated the same—which means your best opportunities get buried.

SECTION 07

Measuring What Matters

Here's the conversation no one wants to have two weeks after the show: "So... was NPE worth it?" If you don't have an answer ready, you've already lost. The time to define your success metrics is now—not after you've packed up the booth.

The exhibitors who keep getting their NPE budget approved year after year aren't necessarily the ones with the biggest booths. They're the ones who can walk into a leadership meeting and connect the investment to business results.

Define Your KPIs Before the Show

Choose 3–5 metrics that directly tie to your show objectives. These should be specific, measurable, and agreed upon before you leave for Orlando:

- Total qualified leads captured** — Not badge scans. Qualified, scored leads that match your target customer profile.
- Meetings held with priority accounts** — Track both pre-scheduled and on-floor meetings. Quality matters as much as quantity.
- Pipeline generated** — Within 90 days of the show, how much new pipeline can be directly attributed to NPE contacts?
- Cost per lead** — Total exhibit investment divided by qualified leads. Direct comparison to other marketing channels.
- Brand impressions and content captured** — Video assets, social engagement, press mentions, and booth traffic estimates.

Build Your Post-Show Report

Within two weeks of the show, compile a one-page executive summary: total investment, leads captured and scored, meetings held, pipeline created, key competitive observations, and recommendations for NPE2030. Keep it tight. Leadership wants the headline, not the novel.

This report isn't just a formality—it's your budget justification for the next cycle. The companies that document their results consistently are the ones that never have to fight for exhibit budget.



SECTION 08

Your NPE Partner

Planning an NPE exhibit is a lot to manage—especially when it's one of many things on your plate. The right exhibit partner doesn't just build your booth. They understand your industry, anticipate the logistics, and make the whole process easier so you can focus on what happens on the show floor.

That's what Apogee does. We've been designing and building exhibits for over 30 years—including for plastics, manufacturing, and industrial companies that exhibit at NPE and across the trade show calendar. We know this show, we know this industry, and we know what it takes to make a booth perform.

2,984 Exhibits built	2,625 Clients served	26 Countries	296+ Years combined staff experience
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In 2026, Apogee relocated to an expanded facility in Canandaigua, New York—a direct investment in capacity, capabilities, and the team that's been delivering for clients since 1991. Over 80% of our staff have 20+ years at the company. When you work with Apogee, you get the same experienced team from first conversation to show floor.



Let's talk about your NPE2027 booth.

Whether you're starting from scratch or refreshing an existing exhibit, we'll help you build a presence that works as hard as your team does.

[Request a Consultation](#)



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